

It's Smart To Be Gallery Wise!

THE WILLIAM ROCKHILL NELSON GALLERY OF ART

AND ATKINS MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

NEWSFLASHES

July 1 - 31, 1936

VAN GOGH EXHIBITION: The superb group of Van Gogh Paintings and Drawings, largely from the Kröller-Müller Foundation of Wassenaar, Holland, will remain on view at the Gallery through Sunday, July 12th. From Kansas City it goes to Minneapolis on its way back to Europe and once there it will become the property of the Dutch Government. It will be housed in a new public museum and will never leave the country again. This is the last opportunity to see a comprehensive group of the work of this artist who has assumed major importance in the art history of the world.

Thousands have seen it in the month that it has been in Kansas City and have marveled at the beauty of the brilliant colourings and at the dramatic way the paintings reflect the tragic life of the artist. No other exhibition ever shown in America has had the great appeal, or has been so satisfying in its completeness. Canvases that hitherto have been known only in reproductions, have thrilled everyone by their glowing yellows and vibrant blues. The frustrated and tormented life of the artist, clouded in the last years by a mental collapse and only suggested in the books built about him, now is clearly mirrored in the studies of cypress trees and ravines and burning corn fields.

A survey is being conducted to learn why hundreds of thousands have been attracted to this Exhibition and it is gratifying to know that many have come to love his paintings through our own superb "Olive Grove" and have been led by its beauty to want to see more of the artist's work. Many have had their interest aroused by the several books on Van Gogh, but the real attraction would seem to be the sheer beauty of his canvases.

Everyone is urged to see it, not once, but many times. It is the last opportunity America will have to see these stunning paintings and the drawings which are poignant records of his brief life.

The Gallery will remain open on Wednesday Evenings, July 1st and 8th in order that everyone may have an opportunity to see the Van Gogh Exhibition. No formal lectures will be given, but members of the staff will be present to answer questions or give informal talks. With the close of the Van Gogh Exhibition, the Wednesday Evening openings will be discontinued until the first of October.

In connection with the Van Gogh Exhibition, the staff and the Director wish to express appreciation to the various organizations who so graciously assisted the Gallery by acting as hostesses during the show. The following organizations participated: Kansas City Music Club, Pi Phi, Kappa Kappa Gamma, Delta Gamma and Kappa Alpha Theta Sororities, Daughters of American Colonists, Womens City Club, University Womens' Club, the Junior Athenaeum, Camp Fire Girls and Girl Scouts.

Sunday, July 12th is the last chance to see the Millet-like "Potato Diggers", the joyous colouring of "The Bridge at Arles", the tragic "Cypresses", the stunning "Mme. Roulin" and "The Actor" and the superb Japanese beauty of "The Pines".

JAVANESE THEATRE ARTS: Beginning Wednesday, July 15th, and continuing until the first of September, the three loan galleries and the Blue Gallery will be occupied by an exhibition of The Arts of the Theatre in Java, a series of paintings and puppets by Hubert Stowitts, the young American artist. Our visitors will recall with pleasure the group by this same artist, "Vanishing India", which was one of the most popular exhibitions of the opening year of the Gallery.

The most important part of the exhibition is devoted to a series of portraits of Javanese Princes and Royal Actors. These

were painted by Mr. Stowitts at the royal court, and the small puppets which correspond to the role which the actor is playing, come from the collection of His Royal Highness, the Duke of Kusumodiningrat.

The theatre in Java is not professional, neither is it amateur, rather it is of national and family importance alike. It is the playground of prince and peasant alike. Every house and every palace has its place allotted to the theatre and it may be a beautifully carved and gilded pavillion, or a palm thatched veranda.

Every important event in Java is celebrated with a theatrical performance, and such a festival is the chief means of entertaining a distinguished guest, or the birth of an heir. The theatre is the center of all social and cultural life and by its performances, the entire population is daily and nightly versed in ethics, philosophy, good manners and perfection of speech. For the youth of Java, it is a source of sport and skill at fencing, wrestling, and dancing which require as severe a training as the Russian ballet. Only after six years of intensive work may a Javanese master the intricacies of the technique of the "Wayang" dances.

Buffoons and clowns play an important part in the theatre there, because the Javanese demand comedy to balance tragedy and sentiment. Into the great Hindu epics they have thrust their ancient Javanese deities which become reincarnated as buffoon servants to give heavenly advice to the heroes of these legends.

No performance of any kind is ever played in the theatre without being preceded by a ceremony of incense and food offerings of religious importance. Thus in Java religion does not frown on the theatre, the two are inseparable.

There is the same beauty and variety of colouring as was found in "Vanishing India", and the portraits are painted in the same tempera technique with a great attention to minute details.

SUMMER MASTERPIECES: For the month of July, the Masterpiece will be the superb and favorite painting "Evening" by Cuyp, the 17th century Dutch artist who excelled in homely scenes of cattle silhouetted against the glowing twilight sky.

"Evening" is being shown for the first time since its recent cleaning, and the beautiful opalescent tones of the sky, massed with soft clouds, the calm stretches of canal and the distant landscape with its inevitable ruined tower, are released from their yellowed varnish and assume now their own intrinsic beauty. Always popular, the painting will win new admirers with its calm serenity and its lovely colours.

A recent acquisition which is being shown for the first time, an Egyptian Mummy Case of the 20-22 Dynasties, will be featured as the Masterpiece for the month of August.

Coming from a private European Collection, it is typical of the cases of this period, of about 700 B.C., and compares favorably with the examples in the great series in the British Museum. In general shape it conforms to the human body, and the features of the head no doubt were in a measure a portrait of the deceased. The general effect is that of a wrapped body, with only the head and the hands emerging from the shroud. From the elaborate necklaces which are painted on the wooden form, and the very fine hieroglyphics, it is evident that it is the mummy case of a person of high rank.

The inscription is now being deciphered and it will be published with the Masterpiece booklet. The Gallery has long been desirous of including a fine example of this very individual branch of Egyptian art, and feels that in this new acquisition, it has a mummy case which ranks with our superb Hawk and early relief.

SPECIAL PRINT EXHIBITIONS: Beginning July 15th and continuing until the first of September, Gallery XV will be hung with a group of aquatints from Goya's "Caprices". The permanent collection is fortunate in including a complete set of these fascinating and often incomprehensive prints of the earliest edition. They have been displayed several times, but this group will include those that have

not been shown before.

Our set of the "Caprices" is interesting from another point of view. Each print bears a description in contemporary handwriting and while it is too much to hope that this is by the artist himself, it is possible that in them we can find a clue to Goya's own interpretation of these provocative and often mystifying comments on the Spain of Charles III.

Gallery XIII has been hung with a group of contemporary American Prints from the permanent collection, augmented by several loans from Kansas City collections. Included are works by Thomas Hart Benton, John Steuart Curry, Luigi Lucioni, Thomas Handforth, Rockwell Kent, and Alexander Brook.

With this group are shown for the first time, three etchings from the set of American Historical subjects by Childe Hassam, Louis Rosenberg, and A. W. Heintzelman which have been presented to the Gallery by Mr. John Henry Smith.

These American prints will remain on exhibition until the first of August.

T'ANG FIGURINES: The first of a series of special summer exhibitions in the Oriental Department of the Gallery, a group of fascinating Chinese Tomb Figures, has been installed in Gallery XXIV.

These figures, made of clay and some glazed or elaborately painted, were intended to be buried with the dead. It was believed by the ancient Chinese that the actual object or human being thus represented in clay would serve the spirit of the departed. Such figurines are generally quite life-like and realistic.

They are not only excellent examples of small sculpture in themselves, but they represent a vivid picture of life and customs during the T'ang Dynasty (618-908). The permanent gallery collection has been augmented by several interesting loans from Kansas City collections.

The exhibition will continue until the first of August.

PORCELAIN AND SILVER: Beginning August first and continuing through that month, Gallery XIII will be installed with a group of European porcelains and silver from the permanent collection.

This now includes examples from all the important manufactories, such as Meissen, Frankenthal, Sevres, Bow, Chelsea, and Derby. This delicate art of the potter, which is so typical of the 18th century, has never been equalled for beauty and refinement and the exquisite figurines, animals in bosky settings, and plates painted in brilliant enamels has an ever present fascination for everyone.

Nothing is so indicative of elegance and fine living as is old silver. With the addition of the objects from the Chapman collection and the Logan gifts, our silver now boasts examples from all countries. This metal, fashioned into objects for daily use, has always been one of the most popular with collectors. The beauty of the soft sheen of age, the interest in the odd and ingenious shapes of vessels long since abandoned in our advanced civilization, make an exhibition of universal appeal.

INDIAN AND PERSIAN TEXTILES: In connection with the summer exhibition of the Arts in the Theatre of Java, Gallery XXIV will be installed with a group of Indian and Persian Textiles from the permanent collections. This exhibition will begin on August 1st and will continue through that month.

CHILDRENS MASTERPIECE OF THE WEEK: The Educational Department now has its own Masterpiece of the Week Room. The first classroom to the left as one descends the Atkins Stair has been designated the Childrens Gallery and here each week are featured the best drawings and handcrafts from each of the summer classes. The exhibition changes each week and parents, friends and patrons of the Gallery are cordially invited to visit the Childrens' Masterpiece of the Week Room frequently.

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STAFF NEWS: Miss Ruth Lindsay Hughes, Assistant in the Oriental Department, has been awarded a Carnegie Scholarship for summer study at the Fogg Museum of Harvard. She will leave the first of July and will spend an additional month in the East, studying the oriental collections of other museums.

Richard B. Freeman, formerly of the Staff, has left to assume his new duties as Registrar of the Fogg Museum.

Philip C. Beam, formerly an assistant to the Director, is sailing in July to accept a Carnegie Fellowship for summer study at the Courtauld Institute in London. Next season he will continue his graduate study at the New York University under a grant from the Carnegie Foundation.

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